

HB 494 -- ALCOHOL CONSUMER REBATE

SPONSOR: Bondon

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on General Laws by a vote of 8 to 1. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 9 to 3.

This bill changes the law to allow manufacturers of beer and wine to offer consumer cash rebate coupons. Currently, only manufacturers of intoxicating liquor other than beer or wine can offer such coupons. The bill specifies that a wholesaler cannot directly or indirectly fund the cost of any cash rebate coupon provided by manufacturers of intoxicating liquor, beer, or wine.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that there is no reason for the current distinction between manufacturers of beer and wine and manufacturers of other intoxicating liquors to do. This change would make the current law apply equally to all manufacturers of intoxicating liquor, including manufacturers of beer and wine.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Bondon; Anheuser-Busch, Inc.; Missouri Beer Wholesalers Association; Missouri Retailers' Association and Missouri Grocers' Association; and Southern Glazers.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that Missouri has a number of wineries that feel that they would be at a disadvantage if this law passed. Smaller wineries can't afford to offer the same coupons that larger national wineries can.

Testifying against the bill was the Missouri Grape and Wine Alliance.